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THE
Companion to the Altar:

Shewing the
Nature of the Preparation required,

In Order to a
Worthy and Comfortable Receiving

OF THAT
HOLY SACRAMENT.

WHEREIN
THOSE FEARS and SCRUPLES

ABOUT
Eating and Drinking unworthily,

AND OF
Incurring their own Damnation thereby,
Are proved groundless and unwarrantable.

Unto which are added,

PRAYERS and MEDITATIONS
preparative to a *Sacramental Preparation*, ac-
cording to what the Church of *England* re-
quires from her Communicants.

*I will wash my Hands in Innocency, O Lord, and
so will I go to thine Altar. Psal. xxvi. 6.*

BIRMINGHAM: Printed by T. WARREN, JUNIOR.



T H E
P R E F A C E.



T HE promoting frequent Communion (says an Author very much esteemed) has had no considerable Influence in retrieving the Piety and Devotion of the Primitive Times; yet great Numbers have been deterred from it, by fear of Eating and Drinking unworthily, imagining they might incur their own Damnation; my Design therefore by this short Treatise, is to shew what Preparation is absolutely necessary to qualify a Communicant for a worthy Participation of the Lord's Supper; in order that he may approach the Holy Altar without the least Fear of Eating and Drinking Damnation to himself.

To this Discourse, I have added suitable Prayers and Meditations, adapted to the several Parts of a Communicant's Duty, and which I hope will fully guide him to a Sacramental Preparation; all which, if they are of Advantage and Benefit to Mankind, either in reforming their Judgment, or removing their Fears, in preparing them for, or assisting their Devotion, before, at, and after this Holy Sacrament; the then useful and happy Effects of it will desirably prove that it was wrote for the Service of Men, in whose best Interest, I shall always employ my Head and my Heart, yea, my Purse and my Pen.

T H E

T H E

Companion to the ALTAR.

THE Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, as it is called by St. *Paul*, &c. hath been set, by too many Preachers and Writers of this and the last Age, in a false and frightful Light; by requiring more Preparation to a worthy and beneficial Reception of this Sacrament, than God hath enjoind; or by threatening of Judgments in case of an unworthy Approach, which *JESUS* never denounced himself, nor authorized any to declare, some very inconsiderate and unwary Persons, have discouraged many humble Christians from a joyful partaking of the Lord's Supper, to their Loss, and its Disuse. Some through a Misunderstanding of the *Greek* Word *Κρίμα*, which signifieth no more than a temporal Punishment, *1 Cor. 11. 29.* have made it, in their undigested Discourses, Eternal Damnation, without Relief, to drink the Cup of the Lord, without the Communicant can punctually tell the very instant when, and the Manner how, the Divine Work of Regeneration was begun in his Soul; while Others have asserted, without any grounds from Scripture, and against their own Reason, that all voluntary Sins after receiving the Sacrament are unpardonable: from which this Consequence justly flows; that to abstain from the Sacrament, though God and Christ have expressly commanded us to frequent it, is the wisest and safest Thing Men can do, because, according to the Doctrine of these Imprudent mistaken Authors, God must have

have instituted it for no other End, but effectually to damn the Men that obey him; which no wise or thinking Person can believe or broach.

What Intention these Preachers and Writers had in advancing Doctrines, which have no Existence but in their own over-heated Brains; and no Tendency but to trouble timorous Christians, and discourage them from an Attendance upon God at his Table, unless it was to ease themselves of the Administration, I must profess, I cannot conjecture. But whatever was the Design of these mistaken Writers, whom I shall ever oppose in the Spirit of Meekness, whilst Reason and Argument are for me, I am sure of this, that the Consequences of such unreasonable and melancholy Doctrines, which are the Decay of vital Religion, and the Disuse and Dread of one of the most lovely and advantageous Institutions of Christ, are very bad and shameful. And now to remove the tormenting

Fears and unreasonable Scruples, that these injudicious Persons and imprudent Discourses have raised in the Minds of the weak and humble, *about Eating and Drinking unworthily, and thereby incurring their own Damnation*, I would plainly

and honestly shew those who shall be pleased to read this what that Preparation is, which God and Reason

What Preparation is required to communicate at the Lord's Supper.

make necessary to a worthy and advantageous receiving of the Lord's Supper. And in short, the best Preparation for the Sacrament, that there can possibly be in one who believeth and professeth the Christian Religion, is a virtuous Temper, and a good Life; and if any one can be a worthy and welcome Guest at the Lord's Table, he whose Temper and Life are Religious, he who believes the Christian Religion and governs his Heart and Life by the holy Precepts of it, must certainly be such, for he hath all the Preparation that is necessary to qualify him for the

the great Benefit of Christ's meritorious Sufferings and Death; and therefore he must be well prepared for a worthy Commemoration of it.

But since the great and inspired Apostle St. Paul hath made Self-Examination, in 1 Cor. 11. 28. the only Duty that is required to a worthy and acceptable receiving of the Lord's Supper, I would confine myself and my Reader to that Text of holy Scripture; *But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that Cup,* q.d.

"Let every one who is capable of Reflection, and would be a worthy Partaker of this Sacrament, consider well with himself what he hath done, what he is, and what he is going about; let him try his Heart and Mind, his Behaviour and Life, in order to the Acknowledgment and Correction of all that hath been amiss in each; and then let him partake of this Sacrament, according to the solemn Institution of it by Christ." So that he who would be a worthy Com-

municant, must not presume to come to the Table and Supper of the Lord, till he hath impartially and previously examined himself; *But let a man examine himself.* Now this Examination of himself, which St. Paul required from the *Corinthians*, according to the Judgment of some very learned and considerable Men, whose Writings I very much esteem and value, considered only the Occasion and Circumstances of the Apostle's Discourse relating to the Sacrament, as not concerning their Christian State and Temper; but their Behaviour at, and manner of eating of the Lord's Supper. The Apostle knew that they were really Christians, and, no doubt, determine to continue such; for their Conversion to Christianity was visible and obvious to all Men, 2 Cor. 3. 2. they had been greatly debauched and very vile whilst they were in their *Gentile* State, 1 Cor. 6. 9, 10, 11. and they worshipped Idols, 1 Cor. 12. 2. But by the Apostle's preaching, which was in Demon-

firation of the Spirit and of Power, 1 Cor. 2. 4. they were turned from Idols, to serve the living God, and now worshipped him thro' JESUS the only Mediator: They were become the Temple of God, 1 Cor. 3. 16, 17. and not only the Followers, but the Epistle of Christ, 2 Cor. 3. 3. and through their sincere Submission to Christ in all his Institutions, they were very famous; and therefore St. Paul commends them for this, though he was about to reprove, and did much blame them for a particular disorder in the Lord's Supper; 1 Cor. 11. 2. *Now I praise you, Brethren, that you remember me in all things and keep the ordinances, as I delivered them unto you.* Since then it was plain and admirable to all who knew the *Corinthians*, that they were sincere Christians, and resolutely fixed in the Christian Scheme and Religion, it is certain, the Apostle did not intend, by the Self-Examination he enjoins them as from the Lord, to put them upon examining their Christian State; so

much as their Behaviour at, and Use of the Lord's Supper, and the conforming of these to the Nature, Design and Solemnity of its Institution; though I cannot but think, with Submission to these great and good Men, that St. Paul did by this Injunction, *But let a man examine himself*, put the *Corinthians* upon inspecting their Christian State and Profession: Because it is plain, that he doth elsewhere, when there was as little Occasion for it as there was here: But however that was, since there was then, and is now, an habitual, as well as an actual Preparation, enjoined in all Persons that would worthily and safely communicate in these sacred Mysteries; and since it is as much for our Interest, as can be our Duty, to attend upon the Sacrament in a State and Temper capable of prosecuting the Design, and of receiving the Benefits of it, we must, as this great Apostle advises the Christians at *Corinth*, in his second Epistle to them, examine ourselves in the largest Sense,

i. e. we must search into the whole course of our Lives, and the real State of our Souls, in order to know whether we be sincere Christians and worthy to communicate, or not; for this we are commanded to do by God, and the Church; we are commanded to do so by God, whose reveal'd Will fixeth our Work and Duty. *But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that Bread, and drink of that Cup, and examine yourselves whether ye be in the Faith; prove your own selves.* And in conformity to these Divine Commands, Self-Examination in the largest manner is enjoined us by the Church; as you may see by this Question and Answer, which end her Catechism.

Quest. What is required of them who come to the Lord's Supper?

Ans. *To examine themselves, whether they truly repent of their former Sins; stedfastly proposing to lead a new Life, have a lively Faith of God's mercy in Christ, with a thankful Remembrance of his Death; and be in Charity with all Men.*

And because God and his Church insist upon a large and previous Examination of ourselves, before we may partake of the holy Sacrament which is to commemorate the Death and Passion of our Lord, I shall, for the Benefit of the intended Communicant, and the Assistance of his Memory, &c. reduce the Subject-matter of our Examination into, and consider it under the following particular Heads, as it may regard, 1. Our past Life and Behaviour. 2. Our present Resolutions, State and Temper. 3. Our Faith in Christ and his Gospel. 4. Our Knowledge of the Nature, End and Design of this Sacrament. And 5thly and lastly, Our Possession of those Graces which must actually qualify us for it. Under one or another of these Heads, may all the particular Things, necessary to a due Preparation for, and Participation of, the Lord's Supper, be cast and considered.

I. It is required of those who would come worthily to

Self-Examination, what.

B. 2

this

this Sacrament, that they impartially examine their past Life and Behaviour. The *Corinthians* Behaviour at the Lord's Supper had been scandalous and indecent; they came to it in great disorder; *one before another, one hungry*, having eat nothing, and *others drunken, verse 21.* having been intemperate in Wine; their Carriage, which gave Occasion to St. *Paul's* Discourse, was not what might be expected from, and would have well become Christians at a common Feast, and therefore he put them upon examining of it; *But let a man examine himself;* i. e. consider well with himself what Behaviour is most suitable unto, and will best become him at the Lord's Table, in order to the Confession and Correction of his former Indecencies there. But we are to make a farther Scrutiny than this before we must dare to come there: We must look back into all the Actions of past Life, to which our Memories will carry us, and impartially consider the Morality or

Wickedness of them, *Hagai 1. 5, 7.* Now therefore, saith the Lord of Hosts, consider your Ways, to reflect impartially upon all those Parts of Life that are past and gone, and to consider seriously what we have done with, or how we have filled them up, can at no seasonable Opportunity, be an unprofitable or unsuitable employment of our Time or our Thoughts. Now Time thus spent turns to the best Account; and to do this is certainly our Duty and our Interest. To make this plain to every Capacity, let me observe, That a general Repentance, or a Confession and Amendment of all the past Errors of Heart and Life, is absolutely necessary to our Pardon, Acceptance, and Salvation, even under the Covenant of Grace; for *God now commandeth all men every where to repent, Acts 17. 30.* And as Self Examination (which is, in order to the Correction of all that hath been, and is still, wrong in both) is necessary to the Knowledge of our Sins, and our Repentance
of

of them, so it must be every Man's Concern, Interest and Duty: For how shall we know what Evil we have done, or what is still wrong in Heart or Life? How shall we confess or correct our moral Mistakes; be sorry and humble, penitent and contrite, for our past Sins? How shall we satisfy our Consciences safely, or endeavour for Reconciliation to God, without a special and universal Examination, of our past Behaviour and Life? It is only by this Study of ourselves, that we can possibly attain unto, and preserve a good Knowledge and Understanding of our Life and State, of what we have to confess and amend; and therefore it is every Man's Wisdom, Interest, and Duty, as he would have an easy and tender Conscience, a virtuous and regular Life, or a safe and comfortable Death, a clear and applauded Account, and a blessed Eternity: I say, it is every one's Wisdom and Advantage, if he would be happy here and hereafter, to compare his past Life and Conversation with the Law

of God, in order to acknowledge and reform the several Errors of them.

To examine, is, *ad examen revocare*, to bring to the Rule any thing that we would know and prove: So that the Examination of ourselves required, supposeth an infallible Rule, by which we are to form and censure, to try and judge our Lives: And this is the *Holy Scripture, which is given by Inspiration of God; and is profitable for Doctrine, for Reproof, for Correction, and for Instruction in Righteousness; that the Man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good Works*, 2 Tim. 3. 16, 17. In the Holy Scriptures, which are a perfect Rule of Religion, we may soon see not only how we ought to live and act, but also wherein and how far we have erred, what Things we have done that were unlawful, and what Duties we have neglected, which ought to have been performed to God, to others, and to ourselves. Herein we may see all our moral Errors and Deviations, what Imaginations have been vain, what

what Affections inordinate, what Passions excessive, what Language has been sinful, and wherein we have erred from Truth and Duty, in Thought, Word and Deed. In fine, by comparing ourselves with the Word of God, that perfect Rule of Holy Life, and enquiring with a just Severity wherein and how far we have departed from, or agreed unto it, we shall get a good Understanding of past Life, and a clear Sense of our former Sins, which we are to repent of, before we can safely partake of the Holy Sacrament. We shall this Way soon see, what Transgressors we have been, and how much we need an Interest in Christ, thro' whose Mediation it is, that Humiliation and Repentance are accepted to our Forgiveness and Pardon. Here, and here only, shall we discover all our Sins; *For by the Law is the Knowledge of Sin*, Romans 3. 20. And therefore to this we should apply ourselves: For it will not only teach us what we have to confess, and amend, to pray and give thanks

for; but it will lead us to a Holy Living, *Psal. 119. 59, 60. I thought on my Ways, and turned my Feet unto thy testimonies; I made haste, and delayed not to keep thy Commandments.* The Man that recalls his past Manners and Life, in order to approve or censure, as they shall justly deserve, and he also that hath impartially inspected and judged himself, that hath condemned himself for his Sin and Folly, can never fall into that Looseness of Manners and Life as they may, who live without Thought and Care. Conscience will be more tender and wakeful, when it is made the Censor of Life, and allowed to do its Office as our Judge, with Fidelity and Care; which will make Life more regular and pious, and gradually and habitually refine our Heart. So great are the Advantages of Self-Examination, that it hath been recommended as a Part of the daily Exercise of good Men, by inspired and heathen Moralists of the greatest Piety and Name; Particularly by *David, Psalm*
liv.

liv. 4. *Commune with your own Heart upon your Bed, and be still, Selah:* and by *Pythagoras* (if those Verses that go under his Name, and are called *Pythagoras's* Golden Verses, be really his) who advises his Scholars every Night to review the Actions of the Day, and ask themselves these useful Questions.

Wherein have I transgressed? What have I done? What Duty have I omitted? &c. Which Course, saith *Hierocles* his Commentator, *will perfect the Divine Image in them that use it.* When this general Review of Life should be made, I must leave to every Man's Reason; for I cannot fix the Day, the Week, or the Year: But this I shall say, that this Work (how difficult and ungrateful soever it be) must be done before a Man can safely and beneficially partake of the Lord's Supper: and that the sooner and more impartially it is done, the better. We may approach the Holy Altar of the Lord who died for our Sins; but we must not appear there in the Ignorance, and un-

der the Guilt of them; for this Sacrament was not appointed for the Remission of past Sins, it is only a Commemoration of that all-sufficient Sacrifice which was once offered for an eternal Expiation: It is a Memorial of the Death of Christ, *who appeared to put away Sin by the Sacrifice of himself*, Heb. ix. 26. *And is exalted to be a Prince and Saviour, for to give Repentance to Israel and Remission of Sins*, Acts v. 31. Pardon is the Purchase of the Blood of Christ; and granted unto Men by the Mercy of God, not as a consequent of our Eating and Drinking the Sacrament, but upon the Condition of a true and unfeigned Repentance, which only can prepare those that have sinned for a safe and worthy Receiving of it. We must with true Humility and Contrition, acknowledge and confess, repent of and forsake our Sins, before we can be welcome at the Lord's Table; and this we can never do whilst we are ignorant and insensible of them; and from hence is our Obligation

tion to examine past Life.

Examination is in order to our gaining a sense of our Sins, that we may confess and correct them; and it is every Man's Duty and Concern only, as it subserveth these great and important Designs. But not to confine you altogether to past Life, which is a very uncomfortable and melancholy Prospect with many, let me now recommend the Examination.

*Necessity of
a true Re-
pentance.*

II. Of our present State, Resolutions and Temper.

We are to examine our present State, whether we be true Penitents and sincere Christians or not? *First*, we are to enquire whether we are sincere Penitents or not; *because it is required of those who come to the Lord's Supper, that examine themselves whether they truly repent of all their former Sins.* Repentance of all past Sins, is a Duty of the greatest Importance, and absolutely necessary to our Pardon and Salvation, as well as to our worthy partaking of the Holy Communion. In it

we all have a Concern; *because in many Things we offend all*, James iii. 2. *And there is no Man that sinneth not*, 1 Kings 8. 46. So that, *if we say we have no Sin, we deceive ourselves, and the Truth is not in us*, 1 John i. 8. And as we all have sinned, we are all required, in order to Forgiveness, to repent. Ezek. xviii. 30. *Repent, and turn yourselves from your Transgressions; so Iniquity shall not be your Ruin.* Mark vi. 12. *And they (the Apostles) went out, and preached that Men should repent.* So Acts iii. 19. *Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your Sins may be blotted out.* And Chap. xvii. 30. *God now commandeth all Men every where to repent.* The penitent and reformed shall have all the Benefit of Christ's meritorious Suffering and Death, such as, Pardon and Favour, Grace and Glory; they, and they only, are qualified for the Mercy of God in Christ; and therefore cannot be unfit to commemorate his Death, in the manner he himself appointed them.

Whereas

Whereas they who continue in the Love and Practice of Sin, under the Dominion and Habit of Lust and Passion, &c. As they have no Benefit from the Death and Passion of our Lord, so can they have no Advantage from a Sacramental Remembrance of, and are utterly unfit for it. Without a true and unfeigned Repentance of all Sin, there is no Advantage from the Death of Christ to any Man. *For he gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all Iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar People, zealous of good Works,* Titus ii. 14. And he is called JESUS, *because he saveth his People from* (not in) *their Sins,* Matth. i. 21. JESUS by the Grace of God, tasted Death for every Man so far, that whosoever repents of Sin, and lives a Life of Holiness and Obedience, shall, in Virtue of his Mediation, (*i. e.* his Death and Advocacy) be pardoned and saved: *For Christ was manifested, that he might destroy the Works of the Devil.* 1 John iii. 8. *And deliver us from this present evil*

World, Gal. i. 4. *He came not to call the Righteous, but Sinners to Repentance,* Mark ii. 7. *And his own self bare our Sins in his own Body on the Tree, that we being dead unto Sin should live unto Righteousness,* 1 Pet. ii. 24. Since then the Death of Christ doth not render Repentance needless, in as much as our Forgiveness and Acceptance are suspended upon it, the Impenitent and Wicked, who continue in the habitual Practice of known Sins without Thoughts, Design and Resolution of Amendment, can have no Advantage from the Commemoration of his Death, and are absolutely unfit for it. If these approach the Lord's Table, and partake of the Sacrament, it is only *to eat and drink Judgment to themselves,* to dishonour the Lord, and hurt themselves; for to such the Morsel would be fatal, and the Cup deadly. It is not safe, yea, it is dangerous for such to approach who are yet in their Sins, neither humble for, nor resolved to leave them. The Cup will be a Cup of trembling;

bling; and the Consequences of Eating, Sicknefs and Death to such, *ver.* 30. For this Cause many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep, *i. e.* are dead. Since then it is of the last Importance, "That we repent of all our former Sins," since we cannot be safe and healthful, worthy and welcome Communicants without we do truly correct our past Errors, and amend both Heart and Life, let us examine ourselves closely about this Thing, before we dare to present ourselves before the Lord at his Holy Altar. And this we may do under these two following Particulars, which do include all the different Parts of a real and hearty Repentance. Before which, let me remark this; That some Divines have made godly Sorrow and Tears for Sin, the first Part of a true Repentance; but according to St. Paul, who must be supposed to understand the true Nature of a Repentance unto Life, as well as any other Apostle, and better than any of our latter Divines. Godly Sor-

row or a true Sense of Sin, is something distinct from, and previous unto true Repentance, 2 Cor. vii. 9, 10. Now I rejoiced, not that ye were made sorry, but that ye sorrowed to Repentance; for Godly Sorrow worketh Repentance to Salvation not to be repented of. And as Sorrow for Sin is no part of Repentance, no more is the Confession of it, tho' they do both very often accompany it. 'Tis true, we are humbly to acknowledge and confess our manifold Sins to God; and every sincere Penitent doth do it in a contrite Frame and Temper, *Psal.* xxxii. 5. *I acknowledged (saith David, the Man after God's own Heart) my Sin unto thee, and mine Iniquity have I not hid: I said, I will confess my Transgressions unto the Lord, and thou Confessionst forgavest the Iniquity of my Sin.* And *Psal.* xxxviii. 18. *For I will declare mine Iniquity; I will be sorry for my Sin.* And again, *Psal.* li. 3, 4. *I acknowledge my Transgressions:—Against thee only, have I sinned.* If
we

we have sinned against God, it is but reasonable and just, that we honestly and humbly confess and own it before him, in order to obtain his Mercy, and our Pardon; and this we are to do, not to inform the Deity; *For all things are naked and opened to him.* Heb. iv. 13. But to affect ourselves with a lasting and hateful Sense of our Sins, that we may be humble for them in our own Eyes, and abhor them and ourselves for them the more; and also because this is the Way to obtain Forgiveness of them. 1 John i. 9. *If we confess our Sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our Sins, and to cleanse us from all Unrighteousness.* And Rom. x. 10. *With the Mouth, Confession is made unto Salvation.* And may I not suppose that thou wilt now ask me, wherein Repentance unto Salvation consisteth; if Sorrow for Sin, if a Sense of Sin, and the Confession of it, are not Parts thereof? To which I answer, That the Nature of true Repentance, which will be available to our Pardon and Acceptance, thro' the

abundant Mercy of God in Christ, and about which we are to examine ourselves, in order to know our present Meetness for the Holy Sacrament, consisteth in these two Things; 1. The actual Cessation, or Forsaking of all former Sin: And 2. The Walking in Newness of Life for the future.

The first Part of true Repentance, about which we are to examine ourselves

Repentance a Forsaking of Sin.

is the Forsaking of all former Sins. Whatever Sense of Sin any Man hath, or however large and frequent his Confessions of it be, if he doth not cease the Practice of Sin, and actually forsake it, he is no real Penitent. To confess our Sins without leaving them, is only to boast of our Shame, and tell our Reproach and Folly; it is not to repent of them: to repent, is to have done with Sin, both as to the Love and the Practice of it, and hence are these Exhortations, *Cease to do Evil, put away the Evil of your Doings from before mine Eyes,* Isa. i. 16. Turn

ye, turn ye from your evil Ways; for why will ye die, O House of Israel, Ezekiel xxxiii. 11. And Wherefore, O King,—break off thy Sins, &c. Dan. iv. 27. And without we, in Obedience to these divine Injunctions, break off, and turn from all our evil Ways and former Sins, there is no Repentance or Pardon; for 'tis only to the Men that forsake all known Sin, that pardoning Mercy and Grace is promised and offered. Prov. xxviii. 13. He that covereth his Sins, shall not prosper: But whoso confesseth and forsaketh them, shall have Mercy. And Isa. lv. 7. Let the Wicked forsake his Way, and the unrighteous Man his Thoughts; and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him, and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon. The only true Penitent, that is worthy and welcome to communicate, is he that hath ceased from Sin, that he should no longer live the rest of his Time in the Flesh, to the Lust of Men; or it is he that is now firmly resolved upon an eternal A-

dieu to all Sin, and hath effectually left it. He that continues under the Power of evil Habits, that still delights in former Excesses, and hath not as yet either left, or determined to leave his Sins is a wicked and unprepared Man. He is not only unfit for the Lord's Supper, but also for all religious Worship: He is unfit for the religious Assembly of Saints, who meet for the Worship of a God who is of purer Eyes than to behold Evil, and cannot look on Iniquity. And he is to be excluded their Company and Friendship. 1 Cor. 5. 9, 11. I wrote to you an Epistle not to marry with Fornicators: But now I have written unto you not to keep Company; if any Man that is called a Brother be a Fornicator, or Covetous, or an Idolater, or a Railer, or a Drunkard, or an Extortioner, with such an one, no not to eat. Such a one is absolutely unfit for Prayer, Prov. 15. 8, 29. Yea, he is utterly unfit to wear the Christian Name, and hath no Right unto it. 2 Tim. 2. 19. Let every one that nameth the Name of Christ

Christ depart from Iniquity. And if he is unfit for the Company and Prayers of the Upright, who continueth in his Sins, he must be unworthy of communicating with them, and therefore Christian Discipline should separate him from the Communion of Saints. The Sacrament is to separate the Sinner and the Saint, the Impenitent and the Pious; so that he who liveth in Sin hath no right unto it; and to dispence the sacred Rites to these, is pulling down the Pales of the Christian Church, and laying it common to the World, to our great Master's Dishonour and the Ruin of Men. Since then it is plain to every one, that the forsaking of all our evil Ways is a Matter of the greatest Importance, and absolutely necessary to our safe, acceptable, and worthy receiving of the Holy Communion, let us examine ourselves whether we do not still retain a Love unto our former Vices, and indulge to some favourite Lust, to some vicious and pleasing Habit.

Have I (let every one say who would be fit for the Holy Sacrament) laid aside every Weight, and the Sin which doth most easily beset, and overcome me? Am I not a Slave to some brutish Appetite, to some unreasonable Passion or another? Is there not some favourite Vice yet living within, and beloved by me? Have I left, and do I hate all manner of Sin? Do not vain Thoughts, or inordinate Affections, lodge within my Bosom, allowed of and undisturbed? Do not idle and evil Words hang upon, and roll off my Tongue with Pleasure? Search me, O God, and know my Heart: try me, and know my Thoughts, and see if there be any wicked Way in me, and lead me in the Way everlasting. But,

II. The second Part of true and unfeigned Repentance, about which we are to examine ourselves, consisteth in our resolute Walking in Newness of Life for the future. Hence the Church doth enjoin all her

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Self Examination in Particulars.

Repentance a Walking in Newness of Life.

Communicants to examine themselves whether they do stedfastly purpose to lead a new Life, *i. e.* whether they be firmly and fully resolved to live to God, and to lead, (by his Assistance,) a Life of Holiness for the future. Repentance, according to the Holy Scriptures, is the Return of a Sinner to himself, to God and to his Duty; and Sin is a voluntary Phrensy, a Digression from, or rather a Transgression of, the Law of God, *1 John 3. 4.* in Consequence of which, Repentance must chiefly consist in a Return from Folly, to our Senses and God's Ways. And hence it is said of the Prodigal, *Luke 15. 17, 18.* *That when he came to himself, he said,—I will arise, and go to my Father.* Repentance leads us back to the Path and Duties that we had forsaken, sets us again in God's Work and Way, and therefore it may be defined to be a real and wise Change, or Revolution of our Moral Life; it puts us in a new Way of Behaviour and Action; or rather, it brings

us back again into the Way of Holiness from which we had departed by our Sin, and which becomes new to us again, through our Digression from, and Loss of it heretofore. From which it appeareth plain and obvious, that the true *A true and sincere Penitent* *sincere Penitent.* is a new Creature, and another Man. He not only ceaseth to do Evil, and reforms whatever hath been or may be still amiss, but he learneth to do well, and lives in the stated Practice of all those Virtues that are quite the reverse of his former Vices. He breaks off his Sin by Righteousness, and his Iniquities by shewing Mercy to the Poor. He not only denieth all Ungodliness and worldly Lusts, but he liveth soberly, righteously and godly. He cleaveth unto the Lord, with full purpose of Heart, and is stedfastly resolved (in depending upon God's Help) that whatever others do, or whomsoever they obey, he will serve the Lord. In fine, He doth justly, loves Mercy, and walks humbly with God. This is the Person, and

and here is the Man that is a real Penitent, a worthy Communicant, and a sincere Christian. This, and this alone, is the happy Man, whom God hath invited unto, and will be pleased to see at his Table; and therefore he may, and should comfortably and thankfully approach unto it. And now would I, in Obedience to this Divine Command, *But let a Man examine himself, and so let him eat, &c.* enquire how it is with myself. Am I a true Penitent, or am I in jest? Am I resolved, and come to a Point or not? Have I determined upon the Hatred, and avoiding of all my past, yea, of all manner of Sin? Have I already entered upon, or am I resolved forthwith to begin a Holy Life? To which art thou most inclined, *O my Soul*, a Continuance or a Dismission of thy former Follies? To pursue thy old, or to begin a new and more rational Method of Life? He that cometh to the Sacrament should be determined for God and Religion, for the Lord and his Service. For by eating and

drinking with our Lord at his Table, we profess to be reconciled to him and his Laws: Yea, by commemorating the Lord's Death, according to his own Appointment, we profess to live unto, and serve a crucified Saviour; we ratify our Baptismal Covenant, in which we were given up to the Lord, and we promise eternal Fidelity and Obedience to him; and to be unresolved upon, or not hearty for this, even then, when we promise and profess it, is shameful Hypocrisy and Baseness; it is a solemn mockery of God, which he will resent and punish. Do thou then be firmly determined upon Devotedness to God in Heart and Life, before ever thou comest to his Table; be resolved upon the Love and Obedience of a Son; and enter upon it before thou takest the Children's Portion and Bread, and dare not once to come, till thou canst do it honourably, and to Advantage; with Safety as to thy self, and Acceptance from the Lord; and for this do thou daily strive and labour. But it is
Time

Time to try thy Christian State, since thou art now brought to it, and therefore enquire.

Secondly, whether thou art a sincere Christian or not. The Apostle St. Paul in-joined the *Corinthians*, and us also, (if as he tells us, *Rom. 15. 4.* All Things were written for us) to prove this, *2 Cor. 13. 4.* *Examine yourselves whether ye be in the Faith; prove your own selves, know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be Reprobates; disapproved of God and yourselves; and the Scripture lays down several infallible Marks whereby we may judge of our Christianity: so that it is no hard or difficult Matter to know our Spiritual Condition, and whether we are chosen and approved of God and ourselves, as sincere Christians or not. The knowledge of our Christian State is attainable, and should be endeavoured after. This is plain from the Exhortation and Evidences St. Paul giveth us unto it. To Things out of our*

Power, to Impossibilities, not made so through our own Guilt and Folly, there can be no Obligation, and therefore no Command or Direction; nor would God have given us either Exhortations or Rules to prove our State and selves, if the Knowledge of them was an impossible Thing; So that whatever hath been said or imagined about the Difficulty of knowing our own Spiritual State, it is all made and broached by mistaken Men. We may without much Pains or Time soon apprehend justly how it is with us, if we but impartially examine and compare ourselves by, and with our Rule. The Scripture saith, *Let no Man deceive you, He that doeth Righteousness is Righteous, even as he is Righteous: But he that committeth Sin is of the Devil.* 1 John 3. 7, 8. And again, Verse 10. *In this the Children of God are manifest, and the Children of the Devil: Whosoever doeth not Righteousness is not of God, neither he that loveth not his Brother. That if any Man be in Christ, (i. e. If any Man be*

be a real and sincere Christian) *he is a new Creature; old Things are past away, and behold all Things are become new,* 2 Cor. 5. 17. That *he walketh not after the Flesh, but after the Spirit,* Rom. 8. 1. That *he hath the same Mind in him that was also in Christ,* 1 Cor. 6. 17. The Scripture saith, *That they that are in Christ have crucified the Flesh with the Affections and Lusts,* Gal. 5. 24. That *the Man that loveth God is approved of by him,* 1 Cor. 8. 3. These are the great Characters of Christians, by which we are to examine our State, and prove ourselves, before we come to the Sacrament; and by comparing our Tempers and Lives with these divine Characters of the Christian, we may readily see whether we are real Christians or not. Enquire then, O my Soul, (let every intended Receiver say) how it is with thee? And let me seriously prove my State. Art thou a new Creature? Hast thou crucified the Flesh? Or art thou still in the Gall of Bitterness, and the Bond of Iniquity? Hast

No. 23.

thou the Christian Temper and Spirit, or art thou without it? In short, to be close with thee, art thou a Christian, or art thou not? The Scripture saith, that the Adulterer and Blasphemer, the Covetous and the Cruel, the Drunkard and the Debauchee, the Effeminate and the Fornicator, the Idolater and the Lyar, the Murderer and the Railer, the Sorcerer and the Thief, are no Christians, 1 Cor. 6. 9, 10. *Be not deceived, neither Fornicators, nor Idolaters, nor Adulterers, nor Effeminate, nor Abusers of themselves with Mankind, nor Thieves, nor Covetous, nor Drunkards, nor Revilers, nor Extortioners, shall inherit the Kingdom of God,* i. e. none of these can possibly be Christians, or have any Advantage from the Gospel, which is there stiled the Kingdom of God. When a Man indulgeth therefore to any of these Vices, which exclude him from the Kingdom of God, it is very easy for him to say and see what he is, yea, it is morally impossible that such a one should think or say he is a Christian,

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Christian, he is yet out of the Religion of Christ, he walks after the Flesh; he hath not the Spirit of Christ, and therefore he is none of his, *Rom. 8. 9.* Enquire then, how it is with thee, and ask, Am I one that belongs to Christ? and have I entered his Kingdom? Or do I walk after the Lusts of the Flesh? Am I under, and led by the Flesh or the Spirit? Now the Works of the Flesh are manifest, which are these, Adultery, Fornication, Uncleanness, Lasciviousness, Idolatry, Witchcraft, Hatred, Variance, Emulation, Wrath, Strife, Seditions, Heresies, Envyings, Murders, Drunkenness, Revellings, and such like: Of the which I tell you now (*saieth St. Paul*) as I have also told you in Time past, that they which do such Things, shall not inherit the Kingdom of God, *Gal. 5. 19. 20, 21.* But the Fruit of the Spirit is Love, Joy, Peace, Long-suffering, Gentleness, Goodness, Faith, Meekness, and Temperance, *ver. 22, 23.* If any Man alloweth himself in any of the Works of

the Flesh here mentioned, he is out of the Gospel State and Religion; he is incapable of the Advantages and Grace of the Gospel, and therefore utterly unprepared for the Table of the Lord, *Who was manifested for this Purpose, that he might destroy the Works of the Devil,* 1 John 3. 8. Let us then try whether we are Christians indeed, by not only a firm Belief of Christianity, but by our Lives and Works.

Are our Lives answerable to our Profession of Christianity, and correspondent to the Ho-

Who are worthy to receive the Holy Communion.

ly Precepts and Pattern of it? Do we live and act by the Gospel of Christ? have we a Christian Temper and Spirit? Are we meek and lowly, holy and heavenly, charitable and pious, in Imitation of Christ's Example, and in Conformity to his Precepts? If we can say we verily hope and believe we are, that we do really desire and endeavour it; if we hunger and thirst after Righteousness, we may, yea, we should, come

to

to the Holy Sacrament. We may come, for we are then the Guest invited; we are then well adorned, and shall be fed and welcome. There is nothing dangerous or dreadful; no every Thing is pleasant and beneficial to such Persons. And as they may safely and acceptably, as they cannot unworthily receive the Lord's Supper, so they should gladly and devoutly do it. It is their Duty: For, *This do in Remembrance of me*, is as plain and positive a Commandment of our Lord Jesus Christ, as thou shalt love God, with all thine Heart, and with all thy Soul, and with all thy Mind, which is the First and great Command. To receive the Lord's Supper is to all such a Duty of perpetual Obligation; from the Observation of which, nothing can discharge and free them, but the coming of our Lord to judge the World. So that, for such as these to abstain from this Sacrament, is nothing less than a wilful Neglect of a positive Injunction of our great Law-giver *Christ*, and a shameful Contempt of his Authority; which will have all the Guilt of a moral Precept, and be as severely punished. And as it is the Duty of these new Creatures to partake of the Lord's Supper joyfully, so it is also their Interest. The Benefits of the new Covenant which was sealed by the Blood of *Jesus*, are all secured, and derived unto such as those, in and by this Sacrament. Hereby Grace is strengthened, and Goodness and good Resolutions the more confirmed. Here ^{*Benefits of frequenting the Holy Communion.*} Pardon is sealed, the divine Life nourished, and the Assistances and Comforts of God's good Spirit given unto us. Here we may see in the most flaming Light, the evil Nature of Sin, and obtain Power and Assistance against it: Yea, by this Sacrament, Faith, the Christian's *Shield*, is as it were turned into Vision, Hope strengthened, and our Charity enlarged. If then a Person would be more confirmed in the Love of Virtue, and the Hatred of Sin; if he would grow

in Grace and Holiness, he can take no properer or more successful Method, than constantly and devoutly to attend the Lord's Supper. Nor should a Multiplicity of Business, or the Want of Time for actual Preparation, a Sense of his own Unworthiness, (for strictly speaking, no Man is worthy, that is, deserving of such a Favour) or Liableness to Sin, either discourage, or hinder him from a stated and constant Attendance upon this Institution of our Lord: For they cannot all of them together excuse his Absence from it. But,

*Faith in
Christ born
necessary.*

It may be proper to examine our Faith in Christ and his Gospel, before we come to this Sacrament. *Examine yourselves (saith Paul) whether ye be in the Faith.* i. e. try whether you do believe and embrace Christianity upon a rational and full Conviction of its Excellency and Truth.

Faith in, which supposes a Knowledge of, the Gospel of Christ, is absolutely required, in order to Salva-

tion, from all those who have heard it, *Mark 16. 15. 16. And he said unto them, (i. e. Jesus said unto his eleven Apostles) Goe into all the World and preach the Gospel to every Creature: He that believeth and is baptized, shall be saved, but he that believeth not shall be damned.* So that he who hears the Gospel preached, but will not enter into, nor believe and embrace it, upon the Evidences of its Truth and Divinity, which are sufficient to convince and gain every sincere and unprejudiced Person, is justly excluded from the Salvation that it proposeth. And that because his Unbelief proceeds from the Depravity of his Mind, and is a wilful Crime and Sin, and as he is shut out from Salvation who disbelieves the Gospel, thro' nothing but his own wicked Negligence and Prejudice; so he should be debarred from Christian Communion; For what is the Death of Christ to him, who doth not believe or regard him as a Teacher sent from God, nor credit any thing which he and his Apostles declared to be the Will

Will of God concerning Man's present Duty or future Happiness. His wicked Unbelief doth wholly disqualify him for any of the Benefits of Christ's Mediation, and therefore must render him utterly unfit for the Commemoration of his Death in the Symbols of it, that he himself hath instituted.

By partaking of the Sacrament of Christ's Body as broken, and his Blood as shed for the Remission of Sins we profess our Faith in a crucified Saviour, which he can never do that hath none. There must be a firm and rational Belief of the Gospel in those who would be safe at the Sacrament, and saved after it. And hence the Church requires Faith in all her Members.

Faith in Christ, what. Draw near with Faith (saith the Priest) and take this Holy Sacrament to your Comfort. There should be in every Communicant an explicit Belief of all the great Things contained in the Gospel; particularly "That God did out of his abounding Mercy and

" Goodness, send forth in
" the fulness of Time, his
" only begotten Son the
" Lord Jesus Christ, to
" condemn Sin in the
" Flesh; and obtain the
" Pardon of it, by laying
" down his Life. That in
" order to this, Jesus, who
" had a Being with God
" before the World was
" created, and was the
" Brightness of his Father's
" Glory, and the express
" Image of his Person, was
" conceived by the Power
" of the Holy Ghost in the
" Womb of the Virgin
" Mary, and born of her
" without Sin. That he
" preached the Will of
" God to Men, and set
" them an Example of all
" holy Living in the Human Nature. That at
" last he died for our Sins,
" and rose again the third
" Day from the Dead for
" our Justification. That
" after he had given his
" Apostles sufficient Instructions about his Kingdom, he ascended up into Heaven, and sat down at the right Hand of God, where he ever liveth to make Intercession for us.

" That

" That being ascended, he
 " sent forth his Spirit to
 " inspire the Apostles, and
 " sanctify his Church. That
 " he will come again in
 " the Glory of his Father,
 " with all the holy An-
 " gels, and the Trump of
 " God to judge the Liv-
 " ing and Dead, according
 " to their Deeds; when
 " the wicked and ungodly
 " shall go away into ever-
 " lasting Punishment, but
 " the Righteous into Life
 " eternal. That whoever re-
 " pents of his former Sins,
 " and believeth in him,
 " leading a Life of Holi-
 " ness and Obedience here
 " now, shall, through the
 " Mediation of Christ be
 " pardoned, accepted, and
 " eternally saved, as to both
 " Body and Soul; but, That
 " all they shall for ever
 " perish who continue im-
 " penitent unto their Lives
 " end." These are some of
 the great Articles of Faith,
 which we must believe, if
 ever we are saved hereafter,
 or accepted here; yea, we
 must believe every Thing
 that is a Fundamental of
 Christianity, whether it be
 here inserted or left out.

It is only for Persons that
 believe this, that the Sacra-
 ment is administered now,
 or was instituted at first;
 and therefore he who doth
 not believe the Gospel, nor
 was ever baptized into the
 Name of Christ, has no
 Right to come to the Lord's
 Table. And how is it, O
 my Soul, with thee in this
 Respect? Art thou a Believer
 or an Infidel? Thou wast
 very early taken into Christ's
 Church by *Baptism*: But
 hast thou not forfeited thy
 Relation to it thro' Unbe-
 lief of the Truth? Consi-
 der, O my Soul, that to
 believe explicitly is a Thing
 of very great Moment and
 Necessity: Thou hast the
 Gospel of Christ, which
 containeth all Things ne-
 cessary to be known and
 believed in order to thine
 eternal Salvation. Thou
 mayst read and hear it every
 Day, but dost thou believe
 all Things contained in it
 as divine Truth? Dost thou
 believe that Jesus was a
 Teacher and Saviour ap-
 pointed by God, in Obedi-
 ence to whom thou art to
 believe and submit to Christ?
 Dost thou believe that all

Sins

Sins (saying that against the Holy Ghost) are pardoned, and every Offering accepted, all Blessings imparted, and every sincere Penitent saved, only thro' the Mediation of our Lord Jesus Christ? Dost thou believe, that thou shalt (willing or unwilling, a Saint or a Sinner) one Day appear before the Judgment Seat of Christ, that thou mayest receive the Things done in the Body, according to that thou hast done in it, whether it be good or bad? Dost thou fully believe the Doctrine, Miracles and Gospel of Jesus? If thou dost but live according to this Faith, and worthily frequent this Sacrament, then thro' him whom thou believest, thou shalt be justified and saved. But Examination may be recommended and considered,

*The Nature
of the Sacra-
ment.*

II. As it respects our Knowledge of the Nature, End and Intention of this Sacrament. It is a good Understanding of this Christian Institution, that must fit us to pursue and obtain the gracious Designs

of it. And therefore it is necessary in the Nature of Things, that we should understand the holy Sacrament, before we partake of it. How shall we discern the Lord's Body, or look up to Jesus the Author and Finisher of our Faith, who for the Joy that was set before him, endured the Cross, despising the Shame, unless we know that it was instituted by Christ, and is to be observed by us, as a Commemoration of him as dying? How shall we fix in our Minds a lasting Sense of God's being propitious to Men, (*i. e.* inclined to pardon and save them, upon their Repentance of all past Sin, and persevering in a Course of Virtue for the future) through the Death of his Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, as a Sacrifice for the Expiation of all Sin; I say, how shall we fix in our Minds a Sense of God's Readiness to forgive and save reformed Sinners, thro' the Death of Christ, without we know that this Sacrament was instituted and is to be kept up as a perpetual Commemoration of that Death

Death of Christ, through which God dispenses his Mercy, and forgiveth the Sins of all that do unfeignedly repent? It is impossible that we should worthily partake of this solemn Institution of Christ, without we know and observe the Ends of it. So that Ignorance of the Signification and Nature of the Lord's Supper, is an Incapacity for it; and that Man who doth not well understand and know it, is unprepared for, and unworthy of it. I know some Authors have pleaded hard for Children being brought to partake of the Lord's Supper: But they might as well have pleaded for the Admission of the Drunkard, the Madman, and the Fool: For the One is as capable of *examining himself, and of discerning the Lord's Body* (Things which are indispensably required of all who would worthily partake of the Lord's Supper) as the other. And indeed none of them can do either, and therefore must be neither meet nor worthy.

Not discerning the Lord's Body, how punished.

What the Apostle Paul blamed, and God punished the Corinthians for, with pining Sickness and immature Death, was *their eating this Bread, and drinking this Cup of the Lord unworthily*, i. e. they would have partook of the Lord's Supper, without any regard to the Nature, End, or Manner of Christ's Institution of it; which he calls *a being guilty of the Body and Blood of the Lord*, ver. 27. and *a not discerning the Lord's Body*, ver. 29. One (as he tells us, ver. 21.) *was hungry*, having eat nothing; and *another was drunken*, having been intemperate. The one could not discriminate between this sacred Feast upon the Sacrifice of Christ and a common Meal, thro' the Cravings of his animal Appetite; nor the other, through his shameful and wicked Excess. So that neither the one nor the other did seriously consider, what a solemn Act of Religion they were going about, or for what Ends it was appointed:

pointed: They were lost to the great Designs of this solemn Institution, inso-much, that they came together only to profane, and not to eat the Lord's Supper, *ver. 20. When ye come together therefore into one place, this is not to eat the Lord's Supper.* They received the Elements as they would common Bread and Wine, for the satisfying their Hunger and Thirst, and mixed the *Lord's Supper* with their own; by which they quite altered the Nature of the Action, inso-much, that it was rather an irregular and common Meal, than that sacred Feast which Christ had instituted. *They did not discern, or rather as it should be rendered, they did not discriminate* the Signs of the *Lord's Body*. They saw and eat the Bread, they perceived and drank the Wine, but they put no Difference between them now, and when they were their common Food. And *this* (the Apostle tells them) *was not to eat the Lord's Supper.* The Sacrament of the Lord's Supper was instituted, not

to satisfy Hunger and Thirst, to strengthen and refresh the Human Body, but to keep up in our Minds a lasting Memorial of the Death and Sufferings of our blessed Lord. So that (as St. Paul observeth, *ver. 26. As oft as ye eat this Bread, and drink this Cup, ye do shew the Lord's Death till he come.* The Elements, Bread and Wine, are very significant and lively Signs of Christ's Body as broken, and of his Blood as shed for the Remission of Sins; being he himself instituted them as such, *Matth. 26. 26, 27, 28. And as they were eating, Jesus took Bread, and blessed it, and brake it, and gave it to the Disciples, saying,—This is my Body; and he took the Cup, and gave Thanks, and gave it to them, saying, This is my Blood of the New Testament (or Covenant) which is shed for many for the Remission of Sins.* This Sacrament is a standing Memorial of the Death of Christ considered as a Sacrifice for the Sins of Men. God, considered as the Righteous Governor of the World, did not think

it honourable to his Perfections or Government, to forgive Man's Transgressions of the Law, without discouraging Sin for the future, and manifesting his Displeasure against it ; and yet he was inclined, by his innate Goodness, to forgive and pardon them. And therefore to forgive Man honourably, he appointed by his Wisdom and Mercy, that Christ's Death should be a Sacrifice of Expiation for all Sins repented of and forsaken. And hence Christ is called our *Passover, a Sacrifice, and the Propitiation for our Sins, and said to bear our Sins, to be wounded for our Transgressions, and to give his Life a Ransom for us*. As the death of Christ then was really a Sacrifice for Sin, upon account of which, he is said *to be made a sin-offering for us*, 2 Cor. 5. 21. so this Sacrament is a Commemoration of Christ's Death, under the Notion of a Sacrifice all-sufficient and eternal. And by partaking of this Ordinance in remembrance of Christ, we proclaim his Death to the World, and endeavour to keep up not only in our own Minds, but in all others, the most lively Remembrance of it, as that Thing upon which God pardons our Sins, and confers Life and Immortality upon us, upon our repenting, and final persevering in Holiness and Obedience. It is to remind the great God of the Sacrifice of Christ, which he himself appointed and accepted, for the Atonement of Sin ; and so it is our Plea for Pardon and Acceptance with him, in virtue of that Atonement. It may be considered also as our covenanting with God, and our Communion with him and one another ; here we ratify and confirm our baptismal Covenant and Dedication, and promise a sincere Submission to the Conditions of that Covenant which was sealed by the Blood of Christ in favour of us. Hereby we have Communion with our Lord and one another, 1 Cor. 10. 16. *The Cup of Blessing which we bless, is it not the Communion of the Blood of Christ ? The Bread which we break,*

is it not the Communion of the Body of Christ? i. e. by it we own and profess our common Relation to, and Interest in, the Lord Jesus Christ, as our common Sacrifice, Head and Master; and also our Fellowship and Relation to, and with one another, as Fellow-Members of the same Spiritual Body or Society, *ver. 17. For we being many, are one bread and one body; for we are all partakers of that one bread.*

If therefore we would avoid the Unworthiness and Judgments of the *Corinthians*, if we would discern the Lord's Body, and partake of the Sacrament in remembrance of Christ, let us learn from this the Nature, End and Design thereof. Let us read over the Institution of it, as it is recorded by the three Evangelists, and by *St. Paul*; let us study it well, and so partake thereof with Knowledge and comfort. But this Examination may be urged, as it respects.

Lastly, Our Profession of those Graces which must actually qualify us for a

comfortable and worthy receiving of the Holy Communion: Such as Faith, Gratitude, Love, and the like.

This Sacrament was instituted not to begin, so much as to carry on, the Divine Life; not to excite, so much as to confirm and strengthen holy Resolutions, and the best Dispositions, of the Human Nature; and therefore the divine Life and holy Resolutions must be conceived and begun before a Person can be worthy to communicate in it. He that partakes should be rich in Faith, and full of Gratitude and Love, because he must there exercise those Graces, if he would be accepted and receive Advantage.

He should be rich in Faith: Faith, not only in the Being and Mercy of God, but also in a crucified Saviour and an invisible State, is necessary to worthy receiving. The Receiver must look beyond the Elements, to the Things signified by them; and therefore, *that Faith, which*

is the Evidence of Things not seen, must be in him, and should be exercised by him.

*A thankful
Remembrance
of Christ's
Death.*

He should also be full of Gratitude, that is, he should have a very grateful Sense of the Love of God and Christ, through which our Redemption was effectually brought about. With great Gratitude to, and hearty Thanks for, the Love of Father and Son should we approach the Memorials of Christ's amazing Death. God commended his Love to us, in that while we were yet Sinners, Christ died for us, Rom. 5. 8. Herein is Love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the Propitiation for our Sins, 1 John 4. 10. For God so loved the World, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting Life, John 3. 16. And as this surprising Love of God the Father, calls for our highest Praise and Thanks, so also doth the Love and Grace of his Son: For greater

Love bath no Man than this, That a Man lay down his Life for his Friend, John 15. 13. And yet admire it, O my Soul, while we were yet Sinners, Enemies, Rebels unworthy of Pardon and Favour, Christ died for us. Bless the Lord, O my Soul, and all that is within me bless his holy Name; bless the Lord, O my Soul, and forget none of his Benefits, who forgiveth all thine Iniquities, who healeth all thy Diseases, who redeemeth thy Life from Destruction, and crowneth thee with Loving-kindness and tender Mercies. Such Love calls for sublime praise and grateful acknowledgment. And whenever we come to commemorate the Love of God and of Christ, in the Way himself hath appointed, it should be with unfeigned Thanks. And hence the Church hath wisely required and recommended, a thankful Remembrance of his Death. Thanksgiving did always accompany the Sacrament, Matth. 26. 27. And Jesus took the Cup, and gave Thanks, &c. 1 Cor. 11. 23, 24. The Lord Jesus the same Night

Night in which he was betrayed, took Bread, and when he had given Thanks, he brake it. And hence the Sacrament is usually and was early called the *Eucharist*, i. e. the religious *Thanksgiving*; and by St. Paul, the *Cup of Blessing or Thanksgiving*, 1 Cor. 10. 16. We are to praise and thank God for our daily Bread, for all the Comforts and Mercies of this Life; but when we are eating for the Nourishment of our religious Life, and the strengthening of Grace; when we receive the Holy Sacrament, that perpetual Memorial of the Love of God in the Death of his Son, we should return Thanks in the most grateful Strains; and therefore we should ever carry within us a grateful Disposition and Temper of Mind towards God and Christ, and exercise it always at his Table; not to be thankful for the Death of Christ, which was the greatest Favour ever manifested to Men, and an Assurance to them of Favours still higher and farther, (according to *Rom. 8. 32*) is

The vilest Ingratitude and Sin. Had we not been redeemed by the Mercy of God in Christ, or by the Death of Christ, which sprung from the Mercy of God, O what deplorable Circumstances had we been in! How ignorant and wicked here, and how miserable for ever: O my Soul! Do thou never forget to commemorate with the greatest Gratitude and Joy, this amazing Love. For ever retain a lively Sense of the unmerited Favour; and as oft as thou partakest, bless God and Jesus for it. Think over the Love that redeemed thee. Passion doth naturally apply itself to Passion, and Love excite or begets Love, in all ingenuous Minds. Think then, till thine Heart glows with Love and Gratitude, in Time it will be so, *Pf. 39. 3*. But he that comes to the Sacrament should be full of Love to God, to Christ, and to all Mankind. *We love him*, (saith St. John, 1 Epist. 4. 19.) *because he first loved us*. And, saith St. Paul, *the Love of Christ constraineth us*; And
Grace

Grace be with all them that love our Lord Jesus Christ in Sincerity. Such Love, as that Jesus and the Father have manifested to us, should (and it will then, seriously meditated upon) raise ours in a sacred Flame, and constrain us to all Returns of Affection. We cannot but love God with all our Heart and Soul, Mind and Strength, which is the great Commandment. When we consider how he hath loved us. But, as we have this Commandment from God, that he who loveth him, should love his Brother also. And as he is a Liar, who saith he loveth God, and yet hateth his Brother, 1 John 4. 20, 21. So it is wisely required of those who would be meet Partakers of the holy Communion, that when they receive it, *they be in Charity with all Men.* To be in Love with our Neighbour, and Charity with all Men, is as necessary to our communicating worthily, as it is to have Faith in Christ and Repentance towards God. Nor is there any thing that our Lord was more concerned to promote among his Followers, than

mutual Compassion and Charity. Hence he gave them a particular Charge, but a little before he died, and about the Time of the Institution of this Sacrament, to love one another. *John 13. 34. A new Commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another, &c.* and Chap. 15. 12. *This is my Commandment, that ye love one another, as I have loved you.* And again ver. 17. *These Things I command you, that ye love one another.* And lest this affectionate Charge should fail of inspiring them with the sincerest Respect, he has wisely calculated this Ordinance for the promoting of Brotherly Love, and mutual Charity. For when we are commemorating the Death of Christ, as a propitiation for our Sins, and not for our Sins only, but also for the Sins of the whole World, we cannot but find a noble Spirit of Humanity and an universal Love of Mankind promoted and encouraged within us. *If God so loved us, we who need each others good Offices and Help, ought also to love one another.* We should respect

spect their Persons, and wish well to their Affairs, and to do them all the tender Offices of a real and sincere Affection. We should live peaceably with all Men, *Heb. 12. 14.* and love our Enemies, *Matth. 5. 44.* for Contention and Variance, Wrath and Malice, will hinder the Acceptance of our Prayers and of ourselves, *1 Tim. 2. 8.* And hence St. Paul declares, *1 Cor. 11. 20.* *That when the Corinthians came together in one Place, it was not to eat the Lord's Supper; because saith Of forgiving he, when ye come together in the Church, I hear that there be Divisions among you.* When we come to the Holy Sacrament, at which we publicly declare our mutual Agreement, Fellowship, and Communion, one with another: There should be no Enmity or Hatred of any one. No, there should be real Charity and Good-will, yea, mutual Reconciliation and Love, *Matth. 5. 23, 24.* *If thou bring thy Gift to the Altar, and there rememberest that thy Brother hath ought against thee, leave there*

thy Gift before the Altar, and go thy Way; first be reconciled to thy Brother, and then come and offer thy Gift. From which Text a Custom was obtained in the ancient Church, for the Deacon to stand up and proclaim, *Let no Man that receives have ought against his Brother.* So that our Love to the Brethren, and to all indeed, should be exercised and shewn forth.

I. In our forgiving of all Injuries. To the Sacrament we come to have Forgiveness and Pardon sealed to us, and therefore we should forgive others. We hope to have all our Sins, tho' they are many and great, forgiven through the precious Blood of Christ which cleanseth from all Sin, and we should, we must forgive all the little Injuries and Affronts others have done and offered us. God's forgiving us for Christ's Sake, lays an Obligation upon us to forgive others, *Eph. 4. 32.* *And be ye kind one to another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's Sake hath forgiven you.* And *Col. 3. 13.* *for bearing*

bearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any Man have a Quarrel against any; even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye.

Yea, if we would be forgiven ourselves, we must forgive, *Matth. 6. 14, 15.* For if ye forgive not Men their Trespases, neither will your Father forgive your Trespases. Without we forgive, there is no Forgiveness, and therefore when we come to get our Pardon sealed and assured to us in this Sacrament, we cannot be too ready to forgive those that have offended us. But our Love and Charity should be manifested.

*Of giving
Alms.*

II. In Mercy and Alms to the Poor. This seems recommended as a Part of Repentance, in *Dan. 4. 27.* Wherefore, O King,—break off—thine Iniquities by shewing Mercy to the Poor: But whether it is or not, I shall not enquire. However, it is certain that the primitive Christians expressed their Love to Christ and the poor Saints, by very liberal Contributions to their Support and Supplies. They made

very large Collections of Money for the Poor, *1 Cor. 16. 1.* yea, the very first Christians had all Things common, *Acts 2. 44, 45.* And all that believed were together, and had all things common, and sold their Possessions and Goods, and parted them to all Men, as every Man had need. In Imitation of this, the Corinthians celebrated a certain Feast called *The Feast of Charity.* And hence we derive that excellent Custom of giving Money at the Sacrament; not merely to defray the Charge of it, but as Charity to the Poor; by which we shew our Love to the poor Saints; and also our Gratitude to Christ, who doth accept, and will reward it, as done to himself. *Matth. 25. 40.* Verily I say unto you, in as much as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my Brethren, ye have done it unto me. And *2 Cor. 9. 12, 13.* For the Administration of this Service not only supplieth the Want of the Saints, but is abundant also by many Thanksgivings unto God, i. e. it was abundantly rewarded to them

them, *ver.* 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11. Charity has been always encouraged by the most Promises of any one Virtue whatever, and kindly rewarded, *Luke* 14. 13, 14. and *Chap.* 16. 9. *Acts* 10. 4. *Luke* 6. 38. 1 *Tim.* 6. 17, 18, 19. And if any thing can recommend us and our Services to God's Acceptance and Mercy that is within our Power, nothing can sooner or more effectually do it than Goodness in ourselves, and Mercy to the Poor; and do thou now enquire how it is with thee. Art thou full of Love to Jesus and to his Saints? Rich in Faith and Gratitude? Dost thou adore the Mercy of God in Christ, and give him hearty Thanks for it? *Art thou in Charity with all Men?* Dost thou love the Household of the Faithful, and live in Peace with all others? *Follow Peace with all Men* (saith St. Paul) *and Holiness, without which no Man shall see the Lord,* *Heb.* 12. 14. Do thou then lay aside all Wrath and Malice; do thou never study a Revenge of Injuries, but forgive Men their Tres-

No. 24.

passes, and ask Pardon for thy own, and so in great Love and Charity receive the blessed Sacrament.

Thus have I thoroughly considered the Nature of the Preparation required to a worthy and comfortable receiving of the Holy Sacrament of the Lord's Supper; in which I have neither encouraged a rash and unprepared Approach to the Lord's Table, nor discouraged the worthy and devout from it. There are some Qualifications necessary to give us a Right to, and render us capable of the Benefits of it; and it is only on these that I have insisted. The Preparation here recommended is only what God and the Church require, to a meet Partaking of these holy Mysteries, and therefore it should be universally endeavoured.

I am sorry to see so many neglect this Ordinance, and yet should be sorry to see the Vile and Abandoned there. What therefore I have been aiming at, is to call the Pious and Penitent to the more frequent

Exhortation to the Holy Sacrament.

F

receiving

receiving of the Sacrament, and to put the Impenitent upon preparing for it. For this Sacrament any Person may be prepared ; and that he is unmeet for, and doth neglect it, is his Sin. Unmeetness for the Sacrament is no Excuse for the Neglect of it, and the greatest Unworthiness is a bad Temper of Mind, and a wicked Life. The many that go on in Sin, without any Thoughts or Resolutions of Amendment, are wholly unprepared ; whereas he who is sensible of, and sorry for his Sins that are past, that

has now resolved upon the Lord's Service, and is willing to be his ; the Man who liveth well, and he who has repented of having lived ill, the Person who believeth and hath been baptized into the Christian Articles and Religion, is well prepared for the Sacrament, and should partake of it in Remembrance of Christ. He cannot be unworthy, or eat and drink any Judgment to himself, the only Thing he has to do, is, to lay aside his Fears, and come joyfully to the Lord's Table.

Prayers *and* Meditations

Preparatory to a

Sacramental Preparation,

Agreeable to

What the *Church of England* requires
from her Communicants.

A Prayer to God for his gracious assistance and direction in our Sacramental Preparation.

HOly, holy, holy Lord
God of Sabaoth, Heaven
and Earth are full of
thy Majesty and of thy
Glory: I the unworthiest
of all creatures, do here, in
all humility of soul and
body, prostrate myself be-
fore thee, acknowledging
my own weakness and in-
sufficiency to do any thing
that is good or well plea-
sing in thy sight: And
therefore, humbly implore
the special influence of thy
Grace and Holy Spirit, to
further these my endea-

vours for a worthy partici-
pation of this Holy Com-
munion of the Body and
Blood of Christ, which he
has commanded me to do
in remembrance of him,
and of those benefits which
we receive thereby. Teach
me, O Lord, the right way,
and lead me in the paths
of holy preparation, that I
may be received as a wor-
thy and welcome guest at
this thy heavenly table;
possess my mind with a
true sense of the greatness
of this mystery, and the
excellency of thy mercy, in
preparing this table for our
spiritual food: Inspire my
soul with pure and pious
dis-

dispositions, and instead of those filthy rags of my righteousness, clothe me with the righteousness of the saints, that my heart may be a clean though homely receptacle for my Saviour, and one day fitted for the blessed society of saints and angels in heaven, through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen. Our Father, &c.* See *Psal.* 23, 26. III.

A Prayer for the Gift and Grace of Repentance.

A Lmighty and eternal Lord God, *who art of purer eyes than to behold iniquity, and hast more especially enjoined all those who compass thine altar to wash their hands in innocency,* vouchsafe me unfeigned repentance for my past sins; a hearty sorrow and contrition of spirit to lament my sinfulness, and most firm and stedfast purposes to lead a new life. It is the voice of thy wondrous goodness and mercy, that if *the wicked will forsake his ways, and the unrighteous man his thoughts, thou wilt have mercy upon him; and abundantly pardon him.* O let

thy goodness (whereof I have had so great a share, and plentiful experience) *lead me to repentance not to be repented of,* that I may be a fit guest at thy Son's table. "Have mercy upon me, O Lord, and according to the multitude of thy tender mercies, blot out all my transgressions for thy mercy's sake in Christ Jesus, the son of thy love, whom thou hast set forth to be the propitiation for our sins." Grant this, O merciful Father, for the sake of my blessed Saviour and Redeemer. *Amen.*

See *Psal.* 6. 25. 32. 38.

A Prayer before Self-Examination.

O LORD, thou art a searcher of all our hearts, and a discerner of the very thoughts, and in whose sight all things are naked and open, be pleased to impart a ray of thy heavenly light, to discover all the sins and infirmities of my past life, and whatsoever else thou knowest wherein I have done amiss, that henceforward no secret sin may lie undiscovered and corrupted in

in my soul; that by examining my life and conversation by thy law, the rule and measure of my duty, I may understand the true state and condition of my soul, and from a just sense and sight of all my transgressions, through the assistance of thy grace and heavenly benediction, I may be enabled to reform my life, and to turn my feet unto thy testimonies; so faithfully to search and examine my own conscience, that I may come holy and clean to the heavenly feast, and be received as a worthy partaker of that holy table which thou hast called me to. Grant this for thy mercy's sake in Christ Jesus. *Amen.*

See *Psal.* 139.

Brief Heads of Self-Examination upon each Commandment.

Commandment I.

THough I have not atheistically denied the Being of a God, or wickedly renounced him by apostacy, yet have I not loved, desired and delighted

in other things more than in God? Or, have I not feared men, and dreaded the displeasure of the world, more than of God? Or, have I not trusted in men, and relied upon the world, more than upon God? Have I not despaired of God's mercy? Or, by presuming too much upon it, encouraged myself in sin? Have I not been unthankful for mercies received? Or, have I not ascribed the glory and honour of what I now enjoy, to myself, more than to God? (Say) *God be merciful to me a sinner, and lay not this (or these) sins to my charge.* [Repeat the same at the end of every Commandment.]

II. Though I have not worshipped God by images, yet have I not entertained gross and false conceptions of him? Or, have I not wilfully omitted coming to church, or to the public prayers, when I had no just occasion to hinder me? Or, have I not rudely, irreverently or wantonly behaved myself during the time of divine service? Or, have I not wilfully refused to come

to the Lord's Supper, when I have been called to it? Or, have I not rashly and unadvisedly received the Sacrament without due Preparation? Or, have I not broken my vows and resolutions which I then made?

III. If I have not openly blasphemed the Name of God, yet have I not lightly or irreverently spoken of him? Or, have I not profanely jested upon, or abused his holy places or persons, or any thing else dedicated to his service? Or, have I not taken God's Name in vain, by common swearing and cursing? Or, have I not taken false and unlawful oaths? Or, have I not broken my own vows and resolutions, especially my Baptismal?

IV. Have I not neglected the worship of God on his Sabbaths? Have I not spent part thereof in vain sports, idle discourses, visits, and many other unnecessary affairs? Or, have I not suffered others to profane the sabbath, when it was in my power to restrain them from so doing?

V. Have I not been stub-

born, irreverent and undutiful towards my parents, rejecting their counsels, despising their government, and coveting their estate before their death? Or, have I contributed towards their necessities when they were in want, and I had it in my power to help them? Or, have not been disloyal to my prince, stubborn and unfaithful to my master, refractory and unthankful to my minister, peevish and unkind to my friend and companion?

VI. If I have not actually taken away the life of any person, yet have I not made my neighbour's life grievous by oppression, rage and violence against him? Or, have I not by fighting or quarrelling wounded his person? Or, have I not tempted him, by any other vice or intemperance, to destroy his health, and so shorten his days? Or, have I not by false or contumelious speeches wounded his good name and reputation? Or, have I not by my own luxury and intemperance in eating and drinking, been accessory to my own death?

VII.

VII. If I have escaped the grosser acts of adultery and fornication, yet have I not conceived lust in my heart, and neglected the means to preserve my own and others chastity? Or, have I not by gluttony and drunkenness, or by any impure thoughts or words, defiled my soul? Or, have I not accustomed myself to filthy talking, jesting, and immodest garbs, and unchaste behaviour in common conversation?

VIII. If I have not been guilty of common and public stealing, yet have I been true and just in all my dealings? Or, have I not contracted debts, when I was conscious to myself, that I was not able to pay, or make restitution? Or, have I not wasted my own or others estates by riotous living? Or, have I not by violence and oppression exacted of my inferiors, or by unlawful usury taken advantage of their necessities?

IX. If I have not before the Magistrate sworn falsely against any man, yet have I not accustomed myself to

lying and flandering? Or, have I not accused my neighbour unjustly? Or, have I not concealed the truth of another, when justice and charity obliged me to give evidence of it? Or, have I not unjustly sought to uphold my own credit, or to blast any other person's?

X. Have I not secretly complained against the providence of God, as if others had too much, and I too little? Or, have I not by unlawful means endeavoured to deprive others of their goods and property? Or, have I laboured truly and faithfully to get my own living, and been content with that state of life unto which it hath pleased God to call me.

A penitential confession of sins; with an humble supplication for mercy and forgiveness.

ALmighty and everlasting God, who hatest nothing that thou hast made, and dost forgive the sins of all them that are penitent, create and make in me a new and contrite heart,

*Here call to
mind all your
most grievous
sins.*

heart, that I, worthily lamenting my sins, and acknowledging my wretchedness, may obtain of thee, the God of all mercy, perfect remission and forgiveness, thro' Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

See *Psalms* 51. 6. 32. 38.

An Act of Contrition.

Father, I have sinned against heaven, and before thee, and am no more worthy to be called thy son. Woe is me, O Lord, who was conceived and born in sin; the thoughts of my heart were inclined unto evil from my youth. Woe is me, that I have sinned against thee my Creator and kind benefactor. Lord, I have done evil continually in thy sight, and my life hath been little else than one continual course of impiety, unthankfulness, and of unworthy returns for all thy goodness and loving-kindness to me. Woe is me that I should thus requite the Lord. O that my head were water, and mine eyes a fountain of tears, that I might weep day and night for my sin! O gracious Lord, look on me as thou

didst on the apostle St. Peter, and let thy compassionate look so pierce my stony heart, that I may weep bitterly for my sins, and may have that godly sorrow which worketh repentance unto salvation not to be repented of, for Jesus's sake. *Amen.*

See *Psal.* 25. 32. 38.

A resolution to lead a new life.

AND now, O Lord, I do not only with great shame and confusion of face confess and bewail the sinfulness and vanity of my own life, but I do steadfastly resolve and purpose (through the assistance of thy Grace and Holy Spirit directing me) to 'renounce the devil and all his works, the pomps and vanities of this wicked world, and all the sinful lusts of the flesh.' Be pleased, O Lord, to strengthen and confirm all these good resolutions in me. And I heartily thank thee, O heavenly Father, for calling me to this state of salvation through Jesus Christ my Saviour, who died for my sins, and rose again for my justification; and I hum-

humbly beseech thee for his sake, to give me grace to continue in the same unto my life's end. *Amen.*

See *Psal.* 1. 23. 24. 25. 119. 126.

A Prayer for faith in God's mercy thro' Christ.

ALmighty God, our heavenly Father, who for the greater confirmation of our faith and confidence in thy mercy, hast in thy holy Gospel declared, *that whosoever believeth in thy Son Jesus Christ, shall not perish, but have everlasting life; and that this is life eternal, to know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent:* Increase this knowledge, and confirm this faith in me evermore. O let me not rest in a dead faith, but that I may have such a lively faith as will shew itself by love and good works; such a victorious faith, which may enable me to overcome the world, and conform me to the image of thy Son Jesus Christ, in whom I believe. O grant me such a due sense of thy infinite mercy, shewed to mankind in so much

misery, as may never depart out of my mind.

I stedfastly believe, O blessed Jesus, that thou didst suffer upon the cross to save me and all the world from the guilt and punishment of our sins. O give me that grace, that I may die to sin, and rise again unto righteousness! Accept my imperfect sorrow, repentance, faith, and weak resolutions; and let thy precious merits, O my crucified Saviour, supply all my wants and imperfections. Thou hast said, *Come unto me, all ye that labour, and are weary and heavy laden, and I will refresh you.* O blessed Jesus, I come unto thee in all humility, and deeply sensible of my great unworthiness; O do thou bear this burden of sin for me, and refresh me with comfortable hopes of thy mercy and forgiveness, and the truth of thy salvation, O gracious Lord; to whom, with the Father and the Holy Ghost, be all honour and glory for ever. *Amen.*

See *Psal.* 19. 57. *Eph.* 2. 6. 11.

A thankful remembrance of the death of Christ.

Almighty God, our heavenly Father, who of thy tender mercy didst give thine only Son Jesus Christ to suffer death upon the Cross for our redemption, and hast instituted and ordained holy mysteries as pledges of his love, and for a continual remembrance of his death and passion, to our great and endless comfort: Behold, I do most affectionately and with all the powers of my soul and body, return my most hearty praise and thanksgiving for thy great mercy and tender compassion to me and all mankind, in sending thy only Son into the world to redeem us from sin and misery, and by his meritorious death and passion, to purchase for us eternal life. Grant, O Lord, that I may always most gratefully remember this exceeding love of my only Saviour Jesus Christ, thus dying for me; and work in me all such holy and heavenly affections, as may dispose my heart to be a worthy guest

at thy holy table, prepared for the continual remembrance of the sacrifice of the death of Christ, and of those benefits which we receive thereby. *Praise the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits; who forgiveth all thy sins, and healeth all thine infirmities; who saveth thy life from destruction, and crowneth thee with mercy and loving-kindness.*

See *Psal.* 103. 2, 3, 4.

A Prayer for the grace of charity.

O Lord, who hast taught us that all our doings without charity are nothing worth; send thy Holy Ghost, and pour into my heart that most excellent gift of charity, the very bond of peace, and of all virtues, without which whatsoever lieth is counted dead before thee; more especially when I am going to commemorate the unspeakable love of my blessed Saviour in dying for me, let not my heart be destitute of love towards my brethren: Extend thy mercy and forgiveness unto all mine enemies, persecutors and slanderers, and turn their

their hearts; which I as sincerely beg for them, as I hope for mercy and forgiveness at thy hands. Possess me with kindness and good-will for all mankind, that my faith may work by love, and dispose my heart according to my ability, to administer towards the wants and necessities of those who are any ways afflicted or distressed in mind, body, or estate; and to do unto all men as I would they should do unto me; and give me that charity which covereth a multitude of sins, that by doing good for evil, all men may know that I am thy disciple. Grant this for Jesus's sake. *Amen.*

See *Psal.* 15. 133. 41. 112. *Matt.* 25. 34. 41. *Matt.* 18. 21. 1 *Cor.* 13.

A Prayer the morning you intend to communicate.

O Most gracious and eternal Lord God, who hast called all such as are weary and heavy laden to come unto thee by faith and repentance, and thou wilt refresh them: In assistance of this thy gracious invitation, I will come to

thy heavenly table, not trusting in my own righteousness, but in thy manifold and great mercies; and although I am not worthy so much as to gather up the crumbs that fall from thy table, yet since it is thy property always to have mercy, I will not despair of a kind reception: Forgive my want of a due preparation, and accept of my sincere desire to perform an acceptable service unto thee: Clothe me with the wedding-garment, even the graces of the Gospel, and then I am sure I shall be a welcome guest at thy table, when I shall come thither in the likeness of thy Son Jesus Christ, in whom thou art well pleased. Possess my soul with a lively faith, profound humility, filial obedience, inflamed affection, and universal charity, that so I may become a worthy partaker of these holy mysteries, to my great and endless comfort. Grant this, O heavenly Father, if it be thy blessed will, thro' Jesus Christ. *Amen.*

Our Father, &c.

See *Psal.* 23. 25. 26.

G 2

Short

Short PRAYERS and MEDITATIONS before the Minister at Church begins the Communion Service.

At going up to the Altar.

IN the multitude of thy tender mercies, O Lord God, do I now approach thine altar; O pardon my sins, and look not upon my unworthiness (for I am a sinful creature, O Lord) but upon those motives which drew me hither, even mine own miseries, and thy tender mercies; therefore help me to supply in humility what I want in worthiness, and let my bended knees and contrite heart shew that I durst not have adventured hither, had not thy mercy held out the golden scepter, and said, *Come unto me, all ye that labour, and are weary and heavy laden, and I will refresh you.*

At giving your Alms.

O Lord, who didst not despise the widow's mite, accept of this little which I freely offer towards the relief of any of thy poor Members. *Mark 12. 42.*

When the Priest is setting in order the elements to be consecrated.

Look down, O Lord God, from thy holy habitation, and from the glorious throne of thy kingdom, and sanctify us.

When you receive the Bread.

Lord, I am not worthy of the crumbs which fall from thy table, and yet thou givest unto me the bread of life. Evermore give me this bread, that I may eat thereof, and not die eternally. *Jahn 6. 34, 50.*

After receiving the Bread.

NOT unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto thy name give the praise, for thy loving mercy, and for thy truth's sake.

Before receiving the Cup.

WHat reward shall I give unto the Lord for all the benefits that he hath done unto me? I will receive the cup of salvation, and call upon the name of the Lord.

After Drinking.

Blessed be God the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, for his unspeakable gift, in whom we have redemption

demption thro' his blood,
even the forgiveness of our
sins.

*When you retire from the
Altar.*

Bless the Lord, O my
soul, and all that is
within me bless his holy
Name; bless the Lord, O
my soul, and forget not all
his benefits; who forgiveth
all thine Iniquities, and
healeth all thy diseases; who
redeemeth thy life from de-
struction, and crowneth thee
with loving-kindness and
tender mercies. O let that
heavenly food, which thou
hast so lately fed me with,
transfuse new life and new
vigour into my soul, and in-
to the souls of all those who
have been partakers with
me of this holy Commu-
nion, that our faith, hope
and charity, may daily in-
crease, and that we may all
grow in grace, and in the
knowledge of our Lord and
Saviour Jesus Christ. *Amen,*
and *Amen.*

See *Psalm*. 8. 23. 66. 103.

**PRAYERS and MEDITA-
TIONS,** which may be join-
ed to the former, where the
communions are large.

*Aspirations for a devout com-
municant.*

I. ENlighten, O Lord, the
eyes of my understand-
ing with the light of faith
and wisdom, that I may ever
look on thee my redeemer
as the *way*, the *truth*, and
the *life*, which leadeth un-
to eternal life.—What am
I, Lord, and what is my Fa-
ther's house, that thou
shouldst thus follow me
with thy blessings? I was
created by thee and for thee,
and mayst thou ever be the
comfort of my soul.—Good
Jesus, my hope and only
refuge, I here render thee
heartly thanks for all thy
sufferings, and I beg that I
may find shelter in thy
wounds against all enemies,
ghostly and bodily: Imprint
the memory of them fast
in my heart, that I may
love thee, and in all my suf-
ferings never want thy di-
vine assistance, or forget
what thou hast suffered for
me. Take from me all self-
love, and give me perfect
love for thee, that I may
now be more faithful in my
duty; and let nothing for
the future put me out of
my way: O that I could
ever

ever remember thee, think of thee, and delight in thee alone, and love thee only, who hast loved us, and washed with thy most precious blood from the guilt of our sins. O that my senses may ever be shut against all vanity and sin, that my mind being free from all fruitless solicitude and fear, I may fix my heart there where true joys are only to be found. From henceforth I will seek unto thee my only good; my affections and desires shall be fixed on thee, *in whose presence there is fulness of joy, and at whose right hand there are pleasures for evermore.*—My will I now resign into thy hands, desiring that thy will may be mine, both now and for ever. Be thou my instructor and director in all things, that I may never do or speak, desire or think, any thing but what is according to thy good will.

II. **I** AM thy servant, O Lord, O give me understanding according to thy word, that I may learn thy commandments, and lay aside all interest, beside that of heaven. O sweet Jesus,

fountain of all goodness, guide my feet in thy paths, and teach me to do thy will: disengage my heart from all unprofitable solicitude and vain desires; and though I live here upon earth, yet raise my affections to things above. How sweet, O Lord, is thy spirit; how pleasant to my lips are the words of thy mouth! O that I could ever be mindful of them, to fulfil thy laws! Make me to die daily to the world and all its vanities, and let the greatness of thy love make all that is earthly appear as nothing to me. Protect me against mine enemies, and in all dangers appear in my defence: Make haste to help me, O Lord, and say unto my soul, *I am thy salvation.* Remember thou art my redeemer, and have compassion on my poor distressed soul; clothe it with all virtue, and feed it with thy grace, for it belongs to thee to take care of those whom thou hast redeemed. In thee I live, sweet Jesus, for thy sake I desire to die; both living and dying I will ever profess that thou art good, and that

that thy mercy endures for ever.

III. **O** That I could now give thee, O Lord, all that praise, glory and honour, with which the angels and blessed spirits glorify thee in heaven ! But because I am unable to do this, accept at least this my desire and good will. Deliver me, O God, from every thing that is contrary to thy will, and be pleased so to dispose of my soul as may be for thy glory and honour. I surrender myself into thy hands, and intirely resolve to submit to that state of life thou shalt please to appoint me ; and if it be more for thy honour that I suffer, I chearfully accept it ; *not my will but thine be done.* Let nothing be now my comfort but thou, Lord Jesu, and nothing afflict me but my Sins, and whatever else is displeasing to thy divine Majesty. O blessed Jesus, life eternal, by whom I live, and without whom I die, grant that I may now be united to thee, and that in the embraces of thy holy love and divine will, I may

rest for ever. When shall I see thee, O sweet Saviour ; when shall I appear before thy face ; when shall I see thee in the land of the living ! Till then, I sigh and bewail my banishment, desiring to be dissolved, and to be with Christ.

If these *Ejaculations* are not sufficient until the Post-communion begins, you may enlarge them, by reading more or less of these following places, in Scripture, namely.

For grace to love God's law.

Psal. 19. 119.

For a holy life, Psal. 85.

For salvation and eternal joys,

Psal. 16. 24.

For assurance of God's care and protection, Psal. 37.

For the comfort of God's holy spirit, Psal. 34.

For the grace of humility, Psal. 131.

For devotion in religion, Psal. 27.

Thanksgiving for God's mercies, Psal. 103. 136. 138.

For pardon of sins, Psal. 85. 106. 118.

For redemption by Christ, Psal. 98. 118.

An

An Act of thankfulness and resolution before the Post-communion begins.

PRAISE the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me bleſs his holy Name; for now I find the mercy, the peace, the comfort, and the grace which flows from this fountain of ſpiritual communion with Chriſt: Let all the world know what he hath done for my ſoul; he hath reſcued me, and many of theſe my poor brethren, from the nethermoſt hell: Wherefore I will love thee, O holy Jeſu, more than I can expreſs, and live and die in thy moſt holy religion which thou haſt revealed to me. O let me never pollute that body, or deſile that ſoul, which the Saviour of the world delights to dwell in. O let no oaths or lyings, backbitings or ſlanderings, profane thoſe lips, no obſcenity or intemperance pollute that mouth, through which theſe holy ſymbols have ſo lately paſſed: For which freſh inſtance of thy mercy and goodneſs, I will praife thy holy Name, beſeeching thee to keep me

in this temper and reſolution of mind, until death is ſwallowed up in victory. Amen.

A Prayer againſt evil and perplexing thoughts.

GO not far from me, O Lord my God; make haſte to help me, for corrupt imaginations are perpetually riſing in my breaſt, and innumerable fears and ſorrows cloſe me in on every ſide. Be pleaſed, O gracious Lord, in this perplexity, to reſreſh my ſoul with ſome ſpeedy comfort. Scatter and diſperſe all theſe dark and ſinful thoughts which haunt my ſoul, by ſhedding abroad the light of thy grace into my heart, for in the extremity of this my grief, this is my only hope and comfort, that I can take ſanctuary in thy goodneſs, repoſe my confidence, and caſt all my care and burden on thee, who never faileſt them that call upon thee; give me patience under theſe adverſities, and a happy iſſue out of all theſe afflictions, both of body and mind: *Turn thee unto me, and have mercy upon me, for I am deſolate and in miſery:*

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The sorrows of my heart are enlarged; O bring thou me out of all my troubles: Look upon my adversity and misery, and forgive me all my sins; O keep my soul, and deliver me: Let me not be confounded, for I have put my trust in thee, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Upon Christmas-Day, and seven days after, you may add these to your other devotions.

I Desire, O Lord, to bless and praise thine infinite goodness who didst take compassion upon mankind in their greatest misery, and hast provided so admirable a remedy, by sending thy only begotten Son to recover our corrupt and degenerate nature, and by the purity of his doctrine, the example of his life, and the sacrifice of his death, to purchase eternal happiness for us. Grant, O Lord, that through the assistance of thy grace and heavenly benediction, I may daily comply with those great things which thou hast done and designed for my salvation. Possess my soul with purity

No. 24.

and piety, and all other christian graces and virtues, that living soberly, righteously and godly in this present world, I may hereafter dwell with thee, O Father of all mercies, and God of all comforts, in those mansions of bliss and glory which thou hast prepared for them that love thee. *Amen.*

Easter-Day, and seven days after.

BLessed Jesus, who hast triumphed over the powers of darkness, and conquer'd hell and the grave, and who by thy glorious resurrection, hast made known the power of thy divinity, and proved thyself the true Messias, keep me stedfast in this faith; and grant, that all the actions of my life may testify the reality and sincerity of my belief, by a suitable conversation; that I may rise from the death of sin unto the life of righteousness: that as I am buried with thee by baptism, I may henceforth mortify all my corrupt lusts and affections, and daily proceed in all virtue and godliness of living, that departing this life in thy faith and fear, I

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may

may have perfect consummation and bliss, both in body and soul, in thy eternal everlasting kingdom, who livest and reignest with the Father and the Holy Ghost, one God, world without end. *Amen.*

See *Psalms* 2. 57. 111.
Whitsunday, and six days
after.

O Lord my God, who by thy Son our Saviour Jesus Christ, hast promised the assistance of thy Holy Spirit to all that ask it of thee, I beseech thee alway to direct my ways and actions, the thoughts and intentions of my heart, by the light of thy Holy Spirit. Let him be unto me a Spirit of sanctification, to purify my corrupt nature; a Spirit of counsel in all my difficulties; of direction in all my doubts, fears and scruples; of courage in all my dangers; of constancy and consolation to me under all my persecutions and sufferings, especially in time of sickness, and at the hour of death; that being governed and guided by his divine influence and direction, I may pass through all the changes and chances

of this mortal life, till he brings me to everlasting life, there to reign with the ever blessed and glorious trinity, world without end. *Amen.*

See *Psalms* 34. 42. 43. 51.

TRINITY SUNDAY.

Glory be to thee, O God the Father, for creating me after thine own image, capable of loving thee, and enjoying thee eternally; for recovering me from a state of sin and misery, when I had lost and undone myself.

—Glory be to thee, O God the Son, for undertaking the wonderful work of man's redemption; for rescuing me from the slavery of sin, and the dominion of Satan; for the accomplishing which miraculous work of our salvation thou didst descend from heaven, and didst put on the form of a servant, live a miserable life, and die a painful and accursed death.—Glory be to thee, O God the Holy Ghost, for those miraculous gifts and graces thou didst bestow upon the Apostles, and for those ordinary gifts, whereby sincere christians in all ages are enabled to work out their salvation; for thy preventing

preventing and restraining grace; for the subduing our understanding and affections to the obedience of faith and godliness; for inspiring us with good thoughts, and kindling good desires in our souls; for assisting us in all the methods of procuring eternal happiness.—Blessing and honour, thanksgiving and praise, more than I can express or conceive, be unto thee, O Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, for ever and ever. *Amen.*

See *Psal.* 2. 47. 72. 110.

After the Blessing, namely,
The Peace of God.

GRANT, O Lord, that we, and all thy faithful servants, who have this day been partakers of the Holy Sacrament, may obtain remission of our sins, and be confirmed in piety towards God, and in charity towards our neighbour; and may be delivered from the power and temptations of Satan, and being filled with thy spirit, may be worthy members of Christ's holy Church, and at last inherit eternal life, thro the same our Lord Jesus Christ. *Amen.*

A Thanksgiving after the Sacrament, to be said at home.

THOU, O my God, hast comforted my soul, thou hast strengthened and refreshed me with thy blessings and rejoiced my heart with the tokens of thy love. How transporting are thy comforts, and how ravishing the effects of thy goodness towards them that fear thee! Thou hast treated a vile sinner at thy own table, and fed me with the bread that came down from heaven. In what am I better than those to whom thou dost not grant this favour? It is not for my merits, but because thou wilt be glorified in doing good to the most unworthy, thou hast this day made me a happy example of this thy free grace and bounty. Grant me this favour also, O my God, that through the whole course of my life I may give thee praise and glory; that the due sense of thy mercies may make me unfeignedly thankful; and that my thankfulness may appear in a care to walk before thee in holiness, sobriety, and

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righteousness,

righteousness, all the days of my life.

A Prayer in private after receiving the Holy Communion.

O How plentiful is thy goodness, which thou hast laid up for them that fear thee, which thou hast prepared for them that put their trust in thy mercy, even before the sons of men! I praise and magnify thy great and glorious name, O Lord, for all those manifold mercies and comforts which thou hast bestowed upon me, ever since I was born. O Lord God, thou hast been my trust from my youth, by thee have I been holden up from the womb; my praise shall continually be of thee: But above all, blessed and for ever blessed be thy Holy Name, for the manifestation of thy Son Jesus Christ, the fountain and foundation of all our happiness, and for feeding me this day (who am unworthy of the least of thy mercies) with the spiritual food of his most precious body and blood, to my great and endless comfort. En-

able me, O Lord, through thy gracious assistance, to perform the conditions of that sacramental covenant which I have this day so solemnly renewed and confirmed in thy presence, and at thy table, that through the strength and power of that heavenly food I have there been partaker of, I may daily grow in grace, and in the knowledge of Christ Jesus, and abound in every good word and work. And subdue in me all those inordinate lusts and corrupt affections which war against my soul; purify my mind from all evil thoughts, bad intentions, and evil designs; and suffer not pride, vain-glory, self-love, malice, hatred, or revenge, or any other evil whatsoever, to reign in my mortal body; but do thou keep it for ever in the purpose of my heart, faithfully to fulfil these my baptismal vows and resolutions which I have now again renewed at thy Holy Table; that by persevering in all virtue and holiness of life, I may at length be an inheritor of that infinite happiness and glory, which

which thou hast promised by Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

A Prayer in private for the Grace of Perseverance.

HEAR, most merciful Saviour, I most humbly beseech thee, and let thy grace be ever assistant to all the endeavours and designs of thy weak and unworthy servant. I am not able of myself to do or think any thing that is good or well-pleasing in thy sight. O let thy holy spirit continually guard me against those numerous temptations which so strongly encounter me. Fix my inconstant mind, that I may not be led away with the errors of the wicked, and fall from my own steadfastness, but that I may persevere in good works unto the end. Moderate my affections and desires, and confine them only to such objects as are well-pleasing in thy sight. Let thy will be the sole guide and measure of mine, that all my hopes and wishes may center in thee alone, and nothing may ever appear desirable to me in comparison of a pure heart, and peaceable conscience:

Teach me thy way, O Lord, and I will walk in thy truth.

O knit my heart unto thee, that I may fear thy Name.

Make me to love thee (as I ought) above all things, and let the interest of thy honour and glory be always dearer to me than gold or silver, or any other temporal advantage; for thou, O Lord, art my portion, thou art my only rest, in thee alone is fulness of joy and true satisfaction, and without thee is misery and torment. O grant me this blessed retreat, this happy security; and then shall I find rest unto my soul, both here and hereafter. *Amen.*

See *Psalms* 86. 119.

MORNING PRAYER.

Ponder my words, O Lord, consider my meditation:

My voice shalt thou hear betimes, O Lord; early in the morning will I direct my prayer unto thee, and will look up, *Psal. 5. 1, 3.* Almighty God, who dwelling in the highest heavens, yet vouchsafest to regard the lowest creatures here upon earth, I humbly adore thy sacred majesty, and with all the powers

powers of my soul and body do exalt and praise thy holy Name, for all the mercies and comforts of this life, and for the hopes and assurance of a better; for protecting me from the evils and dangers of the night past, and for bringing me safe to the light of a new day; continue this thy mercy and goodness to me, and as thou hast awakened my body from sleep, so raise my soul from the death of sin unto a life of righteousness. Deliver me, O God, from the evils of this day, and guide my feet in the paths of Peace and holiness; and strengthen my resolutions to embrace all opportunities of doing good, and carefully to avoid all occasions of doing evil; especially those

** Here name
such Sins as you
are most afraid
of.*

sins * which by nature and inclination I am most likely to fall into: and when thro' frailty or the violence of any other temptation, I fall from my duty, do thou in mercy restore me again with a double portion of thy grace and Holy Spirit, to maintain a more vigorous de-

fence against satan and his devices. Shower down thy graces and blessings upon all my relations [*on my Father and Mother, on my Brethren and Sisters*] on all my friends, and give thy holy angels charge over them, to protect them from all sin and danger. Make me diligent in the duties of my calling, and that in all the changes and chances of this life, I may absolutely submit to thy divine providence. Let thy blessing be upon my actions, and let thy wisdom direct my intentions, that so the whole course of my life, and the principal designs of my heart, may be ordered by thy governance to do always that is righteous in thy sight, thro' Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

See *Psalms* 4. 16. 23. 86.

When you go out of your Chamber.

THE blessing of God descend upon me and all belonging to me, and dwell in my heart for evermore, and bless my going out and my coming in now and for ever. *Amen.*

Let

LET my Prayer, O Lord,
*be set forth as incense,
 and the lifting up of my hands
 be as an evening sacrifice,*
 Psal. 141. 2. O Lord our
 heavenly Father, Almighty
 and Everlasting God,
 whose glory the heaven of
 heavens cannot contain, look
 down from the throne of thy
 majesty, and behold thy un-
 worthy servant, prostrate at
 the foot of thy mercy-seat,
 humbly confessing unto thee
 the vanity and sinfulness of
 my whole life; especially
 the omissions of my duty

** Here name
 particular
 sins and fail-
 ings of the
 Day.*

and commissions
 of sin * this day,
 wherewith I have
 so lately offended
 thine infinite majesty and
 goodness, and so grievously
 wounded my own soul: Of
 these and all other my trans-
 gressions, I most earnestly
 repent, and am heartily for-
 ry for these my misdoings;
 the remembrance of them
 is grievous unto me, the
 burthen of them is intol-
 erable: Have mercy upon
 me most merciful Father?
 for thy Son Jesus Christ's
 sake forgive me all that is
 past, and accept of these my
 prayers and supplications,

thro' the merits and media-
 tion of the same our Media-
 tor and Redeemer. And al-
 though I am unworthy,
 through my manifold sins
 and iniquities, to offer unto
 thee any sacrifice of praise
 and thanksgiving, yet I be-
 seech thee to accept of this
 my bounden duty, with my
 unfeigned thanks for all thy
 goodness and loving-kind-
 ness to me and
 all mankind, § *Here name
 particular bless-
 ings and mercies*
 purely proceed-
 ing from thy bounty, and
 wholly intended for my
 good, and particularly for
 preserving me this day in
 the midst of so many dan-
 gers incident to my condi-
 tion, and from so many ca-
 lamities as are due to my
 sins. Thou art my Crea-
 tor, O my God, and pro-
 tector; thou art the ulti-
 mate end of my being, and
 supreme perfection of my
 nature; under the shadow
 of thy wings is perpetual
 repose, and from the light
 of thy countenance flows e-
 ternal joy and felicity; to
 whom be glory and honour,
 world without end. *Amen.*

And thou, O Lord, by
 whom Kings reign, and
 Princes

Princes decree justice, bless
our most gracious sovereign
lord king GEORGE, our gra-
cious queen CHARLOTTE,
her royal highness the prin-
cess dowager of WALES,
and all the royal family:
All my relations, friends

** Here name
particular
persons.* and kind bene-
factors,* let thy
providence suc-
cour them and theirs from
all evil and danger, and do
thou reward them seven-
fold into their bosom for all
the good they have done or
said of me. Be pleased like-
wise, O Lord (in whose
hands are the issues of life
and death) to succour, help
and comfort all that are in
danger, necessity and tribu-
lation, all that labour under
any bodily pain, sickness, or

** Especially
those for whom
my prayers are
desired.* temptations, or
are disturbed &
in mind; relieve
such according
to their several necessities,
giving them patience under
their sufferings, and a hap-
py issue out of all their af-
flictions. Subdue in me the
evil spirit of wrath and re-
venge, and dispose my heart
patiently to bear reproaches

and wrongs, and be ready
not only to forgive, but al-
so to do good for evil, that
all men may know that I
am Christ's disciple. And
finally, O Lord, since thou
hast ordained the day to la-
bour in, and the night to
take our rest, as I praise thee
for the mercies of the day,
so I humbly beg the con-
tinuance of thy gracious
protection over me this
night. Let thy holy an-
gels pitch their tents about
my bed, that being safely
delivered from all perils
and dangers of this night,
and comfortably refreshed
with moderate sleep, I may
be enabled to discharge the
duties of my calling, and
faithfully to persevere in
holiness and pureness of
living all the days of my
life, to thy honour and
glory, through our only me-
diator and advocate, Jesus
Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

Our Father, &c.

When you lie down in your Bed.

I Will lay me down in peace and
take my rest, for it is thou, Lord,
only that makest me to dwell in safety;
and into thy hands I recommend my
spirit, my soul and my body, for thou
hast redeemed me, O Lord, thou God
of truth.

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